Reform Government

IN

THE DOMINION.

HON. EDWARD BLAKE

BEFORE HIS CONSTITUENTS OF

THE SOUTH RIDING OF BRUCE.

SPEECH

DELIVERED BY HIM AT TEESWATER, MONDAY, SEPT. 24TH, 1877.

As the within Speech is printed from the stereotype forms used in the pamphlet of Pic-Nic Speeches of the Reform Leaders, the reader will understand why the paging begins at 134 instead of 1.

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THE TEESWATER DEMONSTRATION

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 24th.

Illness prevented the Premier from attending the pic-nic at Teeswater by the Reformers of South Bruce. His colleagues present were the Hon. Mr. Blake, Hon. Mr. Cartwright, and Hon. Mr. Huntington, all of whom, besides the Hon. Mr. Mowat, delivered addresses. At Wingham, *en route* from London, Hon. Messrs. Cartwright and Huntington responded to an Address read by Mr. Ellis from the Reformers of the village; and upon arrival at Teeswater a similar Address was presented from the Reformers of the South Riding of Bruce. The President of the Reform Association, Mr. H. B. O'Connor, also read an Address to the Hon. Mr. Blake. Besides the gentlemen named, there were on the platform the Hon. Speaker Wells, M.P.P., Jno. Gillies, M.P., D. Sinclair, M.P.P., Thos. Gibson, M.P.P., and D. D. Hay, M.P.P.

HON. MR. BLAKE'S SPEECH.

Mr. BLAKE, on rising to address the meeting, was received with loud and prolonged cheers. He said:—Mr. Chairman and men of Bruce, more than two years have elapsed since I was permitted to address you, on my acceptance of the office I have lately been obliged to quit; and our altered relations, the new sphere of duty in which I have been involved, and the recent change, have naturally produced a mutual anxiety that we should meet, for the purpose of those explanations which it is the duty, and should be the pleasure, of a representative from time to time to make to his constituents. And yet I could have wished, had it been possible, that our gathering had been deferred even a little longer, since enfeebled strength and lessened force make it doubtful how far, and at what cost, I may be able to accomplish the task which is before me. I shall not attempt to address you at great length; nor do I propose to discuss some topics of transcendant importance, with our views on which you have been already familiarized through the reported speeches of leading Ministers, and on some of which you will doubtless shortly hear my distinguished colleagues who have favoured us with their presence to-day. It is rather my purpose to render some account of my stewardship of the office I lately held, and to consider certain charges recently made at Opposition meetings.

The Number of Cabinet Ministers.

We have been repeatedly attacked because we have not reduced the number of Ministers, and the expenses of administration; and it has been asserted, with my entire concurrence, that departmental expenditures, even though the totals be not large, are fit subjects for criticism, and furnish fair grounds for comparison between different Administrations. You will remember that it is not we, but our adversaries, who have instituted these comparisons; and while, but for their attacks, I should, perhaps, have left the subject untouched, you will recognize the propriety, not to say the necessity, of its discussion in defence against repeated charges of inconsistency, incapacity, and extravagance. I have no cause to shrink from the controversy—(hear, hear)—and I enter with confidence on the investigation to which we have been challenged. It is quite true that in 1867, when the number of Departments was fixed at thirteen, I objected to the arrangement as too extensive, arguing that for the Federal work of the Dominion, then comprising only four Provinces, a fewer number would probably suffice; that it would be easy to increase the number should experience demonstrate its insufficiency, but almost impossible to reduce it, even if it should be found too large; that the principle of sectional and proportional representation avowed as the groundwork of the Cabinet of thirteen was most mischievous, incapable of application in case of the addition of new Provinces, and yet extremely difficult to ignore once it should have obtained for any length of time; and on these grounds I contended that our first Cabinet after Confederation ought to have been fewer in number than it was. It is equally true that since the present Administration took office in the close of 1873 no proposal has been made for a reduction in the number. For this, we are charged with inconsistency. Sir, the charge is uncandid, unfair, and baseless. Altogether apart from the difficulties engendered by the creation and continued existence for more than six years of the Cabinet on the principle to which I have referred, the circumstances had in the interval wholly changed. Independent of the growth of the original Provinces, not less than four or five new Provinces had been added to the Dominion; British Columbia, Prince Edward Island, Manitoba, and the great North-west Territories, out of which was subsequently carved the district of Keewatin.

Largely Increased Work—Opposition Testimony Thereon.

These additions involved a corresponding increase in the legislative and executive labours of the Administration. So obvious was this to the minds of the late Opposition, that in the spring

of 1873, when the late Government proposed large increases to the salaries of the civil functionaries, including the Ministers, we made no objection to the continuance, even at increased salaries, of thirteen Ministers, and thus recognized in the most pointed manner that change of circumstances which our opponents now altogether ignore. (Hear, hear.) But, sir, they forget that they themselves once thought differently. They forget that in October, 1873, at the commencement of that short but eventful session, which ended in their resignation, they proposed, doubtless with the highest and purest motives, an increase to the Cabinet, holding out to the men who were met to try them that inviting prospect in these words which they put into His Excellency's lips :—

"The extension of the bounds of the Dominion has caused a corresponding increase in the work of administration, and seems to call for additional assistance in Parliament as well as in Executive Government. A Bill on this subject will be laid before you."

Had they not fallen you would have seen the Bill; and the men who are now attacking us for not diminishing the Cabinet would have been vehemently defending its increase on the score of absolute necessity. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) Notwithstanding the large augmentation in the executive and legislative work of Government, we are to-day conducting the affairs of this country with the original number of Ministers—with that number which our opponents four years ago proclaimed too small. Now, those who are doing a great deal more work at the same cost are really working at a great deal lower cost ; to do much more work with the same number proves that a smaller number would have done at first ; it proves that we were right when we contended that the number was formerly too large ; but there is no proof whatever that for the present work the number is excessive, and the charge to which I have referred is utterly broken down both by the obvious facts and by the confession of the accusers. (Loud cheers.) I am, however, of the opinion that, without increasing the number of Ministers, a reorganization of some of the offices would be advantageous to the public service. The political work of the Department which I have recently quitted is acknowledged on all hands to be very onerous. During last session a leading member of the Opposition declared in his place that no one man could efficiently accomplish that work ; and I think that the political management of the office should be divided—some of its business being assigned to one of the lighter offices.

Increased Business done at Reduced Cost.

I have obtained for your information some statistics showing the increase of work in recent years ; and I may say that the business of that office approximately indicates the general increase of work in the other heavy Departments, inasmuch as its business largely consists of references from the other offices. The registered references in the office of Justice in 1869 numbered 1,693 ; in 1872 they numbered 1,971 ; making an increase of 278 only in the four years. But in 1873 they ran up to 2,753 (hear, hear) ; in 1874 to 3,403 ; in 1875 to 3,320 ; in 1876 to 4,344. In the first half of 1877 the number was 2,821, and assuming the same proportion for the last half, the number for the current year would be 5,642. Thus you will observe that the references for the current year will be almost threefold those for 1872. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) This increase is attributable partly to the growth of the older Provinces, partly to the business coming from the newer Provinces, whose work is far in excess of their proportion by population, as for example in the North-west territories and Manitoba, where we manage the whole land business ; partly to the alteration of the patent laws, and partly to other circumstances. Another test is furnished by the number of letters. In the fourteen months from February, 1872, to April, 1873, there were 3,000 pages of correspondence ; in the thirteen months from November, 1875, to December, 1876, there were 9,000 pages, showing that the work had more than trebled. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) These figures are independent of the arduous and complicated business connected with the North-west Police, which was for a short time conducted in the office ; and of the very serious extra labour involved under the reorganization of the Penitentiary administration. On the whole, I am confident that the work of the office has more than trebled since 1872 ; and this increase, I repeat, necessarily indicates a very large increase in the work of the other heavy offices. Now, sir, I turn to the question of expense ; and I ask you confidently whether, having regard to the results I have established, it would not be in the last degree unfair to complain of an increase in the expense of administration ? (Hear, hear.) If there had been no needless expense in salaries and contingencies in managing the smaller volume of business done in 1872, is it not reasonable to conclude that the work could not be trebled without, to a considerable extent, increasing the cost ? Could any of you, whether farmer or tradesman, treble your operations without at the same time increasing the charge for management of your farm or your trade ? The answer is obvious. (Hear, hear.)

Work Dreadfully in Arrears Under Late Government.

But what I have stated is only half the truth ; for I have been assuming that the work was formerly kept up to the mark, but in truth it was dreadfully behind-hand, the arrears in some cases extending back for years, and a most painful system of delays had grown up ; so that, not merely had the work increased, but the existing arrangements were inadequate to the efficient conduct of the smaller volume of business which formerly flowed in. You will see, therefore, that there appeared to be no alternative but to propose a very large increase in the cost of management. But before I point out how the exigency has been met, a sense of justice—in which I hope I shall never be wanting—impels me to say that my predecessors were circumstanced somewhat differently from myself. The first incumbent of the office held also the post of First Minister, which necessarily absorbed a large portion of his time and attention, and my more immediate predecessors each held office for but a short period, insufficient for the accomplishment

of any large measure of reform. It was not till my second year that I was able to complete the work of reorganization, involving as it did, among other difficulties, the retirement or transfer of various officers, which could be accomplished only by degrees.

Economies Effected.

Now I will give you the results of that reorganization. The staff had been increased in 1878, and in November of that year, at the resignation of the late Government, the annual rate of charge for salaries, including bonuses and an officer charged on contingencies, was over $13,500. Several changes subsequently took place, and the rate of charge when I took office in May, 1875, was over $15,750. I was, as I have said, unable to make a reduction in salaries during the first year; but the reorganization which, with the assistance of my colleagues, I was enabled to effect was such, that in June last, when I left the office, the rate of charge for salaries was only $10,750—(loud cheers)—a reduction of over $5,000, or about one-third of the rate when I took office, and of $2,800, or about one-fifth of the rate when the late Government resigned. (Renewed cheers.) This great reduction in the annual charge upon you for salaries has b en effected, you will bear in mind, notwithstanding the enormous increase in the work, to which I have already called your attention. (Hear, hear, and cheers.)

A Comparison of Contingencies Accounts.

"But," it may be said, "you have accomplished this by transferring to contingencies the regular charge for salaries." That is not so. I quite agree with the argument which is frequently presented, that the contingency account should be jealously looked to, and as it is one of which a great deal has been made by the Opposition, and it has been alleged that in every department of this Government the contingent expenses have been enormously increased by scandalous waste and incapacity on the part of Ministers, I propose to show you the working of the contingent account of the office of Justice. In the fiscal year 1872-3, which I shall call for shortness 1873, the whole contingencies for that office were $9,470 39; in 1876 they were reduced to $4,996 37, and in 1877 they were reduced to $2,787 78. (Loud cheers.) Of the items which go to make up these totals there are four or five, such as stationery, printing, binding, books, subscriptions to and advertising in newspapers, in which no large reduction has yet been effected. These and some other small items made a total of $2,351 52 in 1873, which was reduced to $2,265 86 in 1877. The remaining items (those on which it was found possible to effect a large reduction) were telegraphing, cab hire, travelling and postage. In 1873 the telegraph account was $4,371 88; in 1876, $1,164 69; and in 1877, $330. (Loud cheers.) In 1873 cab hire was $1,035 50; in 1876, $38 80; and in 1877, $14 80. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) In 1873 the travelling expenses were $1,218 12; in 1876 $322 66; and in 1877, $51 35. In 1873 the postage account was $493 37; in 1876, $228 53; and in 1877, $125 77; although, as I have pointed out, the correspondence has greatly increased. The totals of these four items were: for 1873, $7,118 87; for 1876, $1,754 68; and for 1877, $521 92. (Loud cheers.) In 1876 the telegraph account was cut down to about one-fourth; travelling expenses to about one-fourth; cab hire to less than one-twenty-fourth, and postage to less than one-half. In 1877 telegraphing was cut down to less than one-thirteenth; travelling expenses to about one twenty-fourth; cab hire to one-seventieth; and postage to one-fourth. The total saving on the four items for the first year was $5,364 19, or three-fourths of the whole amount; for the second year, $6,596 95, or about thirteen-fourteenths of the whole amount. (Loud cheers.)

Results of the Several Savings Accomplished.

The saving on telegraphing alone was $4,040 out of $4,371; on cab hire alone $1,020 70 out of $1,035 50; on travelling alone $1,166 77 out of $1,218 12; and on postage alone $367 60 out of $493 37. The saving in telegraphing alone would pay the whole of the present contingencies, and leave a surplus of $1,250. (Hear, hear, and loud cheers.) The savings in cab hire, travelling and postages, would pay nearly the whole of the contingencies. The total saving on the contingent account was for the first year $4,474 out of $9,470, or nearly one-half; for the second year $6,682 out of $9,470, or nearly three-fourths of the whole amount. Combining the charges for salaries and contingencies, the total charge for the contingencies of 1873 and the rate of salaries for November of that year would be over $23,000. When I took office they would be over $26,600; and for 1876 they were reduced to less than $21,000; when I left office they had fallen to $13,537, about one-half, or a saving of $13,000 on the rate when I came in, and five-twelfths, or a saving of $9,500 on the rate when the late Government resigned, and this, mark you, once again, in the face of an enormously increased volume of work. (Loud cheers.) Now, sir, I do not propose at this moment to enter into an inquiry as to how the large sums I have named came to be expended by our adversaries in 1873 in the execution of the comparatively small work of that time. Our opponents at any rate will not contend that their expenditures were wrongful or wasteful; they will argue for their propriety and necessity; they will tell you that they could not conduct the business of the State more economically than they did. Assuming for the moment, without at all admitting the accuracy of this view, I leave you to contrast the figures I have given, and to determine whether they furnish any ground for charging us with extravagance or incapacity in the management of these departmental matters, which it has been rightly said are peculiarly under our own eye and control, and in respect of which, therefore, we have a special responsibility. Nay, sir, I go further—I retort the charge upon our adversaries; I say these figures put them, and not us, on the defensive; that they lead to inferences the very opposite of those which have been urged against us; and that we may fairly ask you to decide that we have been able to walk in a more excellent way than that followed by our loud-mouthed accusers. (Hear, hear, and cheers.)

Economy and Efficiency Combined.

But it may be said we have sacrificed efficiency to economy. That I emphatically deny. The business of the office has been promptly done on business principles; long-standing arrears have been wound up; and when I left the Department my officers reported that there was nothing behind-hand. (Cheers.) It has been found and will be found possible to manage the office with efficiency upon the present scale of expenditure, though the increase of business in the future may perhaps necessitate some small additions to the staff. I cannot part from the subject without saying that what has been done could not have been accomplished without the assistance of a most efficient deputy, and of other officers who took a pride and pleasure in their work. I make no boast of these results. It was my duty—my special duty—to improve the organization of my office. In response to the charge of neglect of duty I have spoken; and I shall expect candid Conservatives here and elsewhere to cease these attacks for the future until they have examined, and unless they can belie, my figures. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) Besides the changes which I have mentioned, others have been made in the same department.

The Penitentiary Board Removed—Its Results.

The Board of Penitentiary Directors was composed of three members. It had a good deal of power, and involved a good deal of expense. Its work was not satisfactory; and you may perhaps remember an investigation before a Committee of the House in connection with some transactions at St. Vincent de Paul Penitentiary, which did not reflect credit on the Board or its superiors. Mr. Fournier abolished the Board; substituting for it one inspector, who is an officer of the Department of Justice. It is true that by this change more work was imposed on the Minister, but at the same time greater economy, a more direct responsibility, and a higher degree of efficiency have been produced. The financial results have been that whereas the annual charge for the years 1870 to 1874 was within a trifle of $9,000, the charge for 1876 was $4,614, or about half the former amount. (Hear, hear, and cheers.)

The Dominion Police—Useless Officers Removed.

So again with reference to the Dominion Police, who are under the immediate surveillance of the Minister of Justice. The annual charge under this head for the year 1873 was about $17,200; the vote for the present fiscal year is $11,000, a saving of over one-third, or about $6,200, the bulk of which was caused in this way: I found there was an officer at Montreal called a Commissioner of Police, whose sole duties were to receive his own salary and the salaries of two constables (who themselves had nothing to do), and to send returns to Ottawa of this transaction (Laughter.) We superannuated the officer, abolished his office, dismissed the constables, and saved the money. (Laughter and cheers.)

General Result of these Changes.

The general result of the economies to which I have referred is, that whereas the aggregate annual charge for departmental salaries and contingencies, for police, and for penitentiary administration was in the time of the late Government $49,200, it has been reduced to $29,100—a saving of more than two-fifths, or over $20,000 a year.

The Mulkins' Superannuation.

As I have mentioned the word "superannuation," I take the opportunity to advert to a charge lately made by one of the leaders of the Opposition with reference to a superannuation which took place in my office—that of the late chaplain of Kingston Penitentiary, Mr. Mulkins, who was said to have been superannuated in order that he might marry, and that a place might be found for the Rev. Mr. Cartwright, a brother of the Finance Minister. It was remarked with equal wit and delicacy that, having become too ill to act as chaplain, he took the opportunity of marrying, and that having nothing better to do, he had since died, whereas if he had remained in the office he would have been still doing duty as chaplain. With Mr. Mulkins' private affairs I am not so well acquainted as the speaker, but I am told that he had been married some six years before his retirement. He was nearly sixty-five years old, and had served twenty-five years when superannuated. His health had been impaired for some years, owing chiefly to typhoid fever, which he had contracted while visiting the prisoners, and to repeated attacks of which he was yearly subjected from the slightest causes. He submitted some years ago that it was not fair, under these circumstances, that he should be forced to continue in his office at the peril of these attacks, after his health had already been impaired and his constitution undermined by their recurrence; and he applied for leave of absence, which was granted on condition of his employing a substitute approved by the Board of Penitentiary Directors. The Board reported to the Minister that Mr. Mulkins had nominated the Rev. C. E. Cartwright, which arrangement was satisfactory to them, they having ascertained from the Warden that Mr. Cartwright was a clergyman in good standing, and well qualified to discharge the duties of chaplain to the Penitentiary. In the course of the inquiries prior to that transaction, Dr. Lavell, the Penitentiary surgeon, certified that Mr. Mulkins had had repeated attacks of typhoid fever within the preceding six or seven years; and that he was subjected to relapses from the slightest causes. The Rev. Mr. Dobbs, a respectable clergyman, also gave a certificate to the same effect. Mr. Mulkins went abroad for some time (Mr. Cartwright discharging his duties as chaplain), and on his return in June, 1875, he brought a certificate from his English physician that he had treated him for an attack of bronchitis, attended with severe congestion of the lungs, and that he considered it essential that Mr. Mulkins should have absolute rest, and that he should resort to a warmer climate. He applied to be relieved from his duties; but he also applied for the addition to his allowance of some years of service, which it was in the power of the Government to grant. I refused that addition, but I thought it my duty, under the circumstances I have mentioned, and having formed the opinion that the duties of

chaplain could not be efficiently discharged by Mr. Mulkins, to agree to his superannuation. I recommended that act; I am responsible for it, and I am quite prepared to defend it. After the superannuation of Mr. Mulkins, it became my duty to recommend some one for the vacant office. Having ascertained that the expectations which the Board of Directors had formed with reference to the suitability of Mr. Cartwright had been more than realized, I believed him a fit person for the office of which he had been discharging the duties; I therefore offered it to him; he accepted it, and was appointed. This, gentlemen, is a plain history of a transaction which took place before the late session of Parliament, which was never challenged there—(hear, hear)—about which no papers were asked for, but which is now, on the occasion of the death (within a few months of his superannuation) of the late chaplain, brought forward as a gross and indefensible job—on the false statement that we had superannuated a man who was in perfect health in order that we might appoint a Minister's brother to his office. These may be small matters, but they are doubtless legitimate grounds of attack if wrong; and if attacked it is our right and our duty to defend ourselves in small things as well as great. (Loud cheers.) It is therefore fitting to make public the facts which, if our accusers had acted with fair play, they would have demanded where they had a right to demand them—in Parliament; and to make them public at the earliest possible moment after the false charge has been thrown broadcast over the land.

Administration of Justice—Natural Increase of Expenditures.

There are some items in the expenses of the Administration of Justice which must necessarily increase. Every effort to economise has been made, but while the tide of crime runs so high, as unfortunately it has risen in Canada of late years; while the number of our convicts increases so rapidly; while it is necessary to erect new penitentiaries in the remote Provinces of Manitoba and Columbia for the reception of small numbers of convicts; while improvements are being made in other penitentiaries, it is impossible to keep at the same level the charges for services that are so increased. (Hear, hear.) All I can say is, that although these are not so immediately at the command and under the control of the Minister as the other services to which I have referred, every effort has been made by systematization and organization, by rigid inquiry, by improvements in the modes of tendering and of accounts, by the most efficient use of the staff at our disposal, by the utilization, so far as practicable, of the convict labour, to reduce these expenses to the lowest point compatible with the public service. Some of these improvements are only beginning to bear fruit. The reorganization of St. Vincent de Paul, which was in a disgraceful condition, is, I am glad to say, acknowledged to be satisfactory. The completion of the new penitentiary for the Maritime Provinces will put matters in those quarters on a footing very much better than the present; and the sale of Rockwood Asylum for about $100,000 has provided us with a fund, the interest on which will more than pay the expense of maintaining the criminal lunatics.

Increase in the Judiciary.

The remaining great item of expense with which the Department of Justice is concerned is the salaries of the judges. You know that under our constitution there is unhappily a divided power with reference to the judiciary, the Local Legislatures organizing the Provincial Courts, while the Federal authorities appoint and pay the judges. We have, under these circumstances, but a very limited degree of control over this expenditure. The fact that it has increased has been made the subject of a very ignorant attack, not, indeed, in the House of Commons, but elsewhere. The increases are due to the following causes:—First, to the additions made to the salaries of the judges in the spring of 1873; secondly, to the creation, by several of the Provincial Legislatures, of additional courts; thirdly, to the retirement, through infirmity, of some of the judges; and lastly, to the creation of the Supreme Court. With the first of these we have nothing to do; over the second our control was, as I have pointed out, hardly appreciable, and no hint of dissatisfaction at our action on this or on the third head has been expressed in the House; and as to the Supreme Court, that institution had been proclaimed as a necessity by our opponents, was recognized as such by us, and has been established on the most economical basis consistent with its efficiency. Something has been said adverse to the change made by the Legislature of this Province in the Ontario Court of Appeal. I learn that my friend the Attorney-General of Ontario is to be here to-day, and I hope he may address you in vindication of that measure, which, for my part, I should, under other circumstances, be very ready to defend, believing, as I do, that a change was absolutely necessary, and that the plan adopted was the simplest and most economical which could at the time be devised. I entertain the hope that at some future day the appeal may be direct to the Supreme Court, and it will be found in such case that all the present judicial strength of the Province can be utilized to advantage. However, with this I have, as a Canadian Minister, no direct concern; and I will only add that I am prepared, when our assailants condescend to details on this subject of judicial salaries, to meet them, and to establish that we have done nothing which was avoidable, or of which we have reason to be ashamed. (Hear, hear, and cheers.)

The Dispensation of Patronage.

Now, with reference to the patronage which belongs to my late office, you can not have failed to observe that from time to time the basest motives have been insinuated as the grounds for appointments, the merits of which could not be disputed. I shall make no long comment nor engage in any retort on this accusation. I have simply to say that these appointments were made with the most earnest desire on the part of my colleagues and myself to choose the very best and fittest men for your service. (Hear, hear, and loud cheers.) It is of comparatively little consequence who fills a political office, because if the man who fills it fails to meet your expectations, or turns out incompetent, you can very soon turn him out, and so end the trouble; but the man who is ap-

pointed a judge, and as such may at any time hold in his hands the fate, whether as to fortune, freedom, or good name, of any one of us, this man holds his office by a tenure practically not far removed from life. He may be a blessing, but again he may be a curse, to his country for twenty or thirty years; and therefore it is a most sacred duty on the part of a Government to search for the very best men to administer these tremendous responsibilities. Now, I say that the very best men have been sought, and I believe that as a rule the very best men have been found, and I am glad to know that the appointments have given general satisfaction. I may add that the same principle has been applied in the selection of the other public officers whom I have been called on to recommend, and that I have in no case permitted political claims to supersede the consideration of efficiency, which should, in my opinion, be the one thing needful in a candidate for the public service. (Hear, hear, and cheers.)

Commutation of Sentences.

Another ground of attack, out of session, on the administration of justice, was as to the exercise of the prerogative of mercy in capital cases. I am spared the necessity of any vindication of my course in that regard, because my accusers, bold and blatant as they were behind my back and before the session, did not when we met venture, although repeated opportunities occurred, to repeat the gross charges which had been made that the prerogative had been sold for money; or to question, I do not say the integrity, but even the discretion, with which that prerogative had been administered in any one case. No less than three bills were introduced, and one or more returns were moved for, on the subject of capital punishment, each furnishing fair ground for the discussion; besides this the question might have been raised any day on a motion; but no man was found to say a single word, or utter a single whisper, of condemnation or disapproval, or even of enquiry. (Hear, hear.) The pain and anxiety attendant on the decision of these cases is very great; indeed it is hardly conceivable to those who have not been called on to deal with them; and I do not disguise from you that that pain and anxiety was aggravated by these unworthy charges. But, as I have told you, they were not heard in that place in which they could be met; I am vindicated by the silence of my opponents; and having now no attack to answer, I pass from the subject. (Hear, hear, and cheers.)

Legislative Work Accomplished.

Without detaining you by a more extended reference to the executive and administrative work, departmental and general, of the last two years, and being anxious to turn to the legislative work, I think I have said enough to show you that we have been fully engrossed with the pressing duties of our offices, and that there is reasonable cause for our inability to be much amongst our constituents, or to engage in the discussion of topics which, I am free to say, would be much more to my taste than the work which was before us. As to the legislative business of Parliament during the last two sessions, I propose to confine my remarks to some of those measures with which I was more immediately connected, without touching at all on the many important Acts passed during those sessions under the auspices of other Ministers. I must in the first place remind you that in previous sessions the Government had dealt with three capital pieces of legislation—namely, the Election Law, the Insolvent Law, and the Supreme Court Law.

Tory Claims to Election Act.

All the merits of the Election Law are now claimed by our predecessors. They say they gave most of them, and were quite prepared to give the rest. Now, we had proposed these improvements several times before the election of 1872. We proposed the trial of election petitions by judges; they voted it down. (Hear, hear.) We proposed simultaneous polling; they voted it down. We proposed the ballot; they voted it down. We proposed the appointment of certain classes of permanent officials as returning officers, instead of the system of the late Government, by which they chose whom they pleased to act as returning-officer, as arbiter and judge between themselves and their adversaries; they voted it down. (Hear, hear.) All these reforms which are now embodied in your law were proposed in Parliament before 1872, and were, on one pretext or another, voted down by the late Government. They were forced after that election to give the trial of election cases by judges. As I happen to know, several of their own candidates were obliged to pledge themselves to that reform during the election, and the Government was thus forced to yield. They now tell us they would have given the rest in good time. Well, I don't doubt that they would have given you the rest as soon as they found themselves compelled to do so. (Hear, hear.) Having held off as long as they could, I have no doubt that we should have extorted as the price of their continuance in office the surrender of some of those means by which they were used to maintain themselves in power. But to claim your gratitude and confidence for good intentions so very tardy, and produced by such influences, is too audacious. You owe these reforms to the Liberal party, and to them alone. (Cheers.)

The Ballot—Its Satisfactory Operation.

With reference to the ballot. I told you in 1874 that I believed it was not required except for a small minority of our people, but that it was important to all of us that the vote of each of us should be free; and while, for my own part, I have never concealed my desire for the open vote when the state of society and of public feeling shall be so improved that the open vote shall be free, I am still of opinion that, in our present condition, the ballot tends more than the open vote to that result, and therefore is a beneficial reform. (Hear, hear.) It has been whispered, indeed, that for a considerable class of our fellow-citizens the ballot does not insure secrecy. That, however, has not been established, and the discussion of the serious consequences which might flow from such a state of things would be at present premature. As things stand, I believe the working of the ballot so far has shown that it is, upon the whole, suited to the present condition of the country, and that it is likely to stand for some time as a political institution. (Hear, hear.)

The Electoral Franchise.

It was and is the policy of our opponents to frame a uniform franchise all over this wide country, and to engage a horde of Government employees, at a great expense, to make the lists and determine who should be the voters. We, on the other hand, by the law which is now in force, gave to each Province the franchise which that Province considers best suited to its circumstances, and this at comparatively no expense, the local lists being used for the Commons elections. (Hear, hear.) This talk of uniformity of franchise is to my mind preposterous. Uniformity in words would mean diversity in fact—(hear, hear)—for the circumstances and occupations of the people, and the form and distribution of wealth in each of the Provinces, is very different. To lay down one uniform rule would suit the condition of no one Province accurately, and would thus dissatisfy all; it would create two different franchises in the same Province; it would cause enormous expense; it would place the control of the lists in the hands of Government employees; and it would be to my mind on all grounds a mistake. Remember, too, that if at any time Parliament is dissatisfied with a local franchise, it retains power to frame one according to its own views. Meantime it is the policy of the Liberal party to adopt the franchise of the Local Legislature.

The Farmers' Sons Act—A Word to Young Men.

I am glad to know that the Ontario franchise has lately been much improved. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) One of my suggestions, in a speech in 1874 which evoked some discussion, has found its way into the statute book. A class of our population, which as I thought was entitled to the franchise by its intelligence and by its real though unrecognized stake in the country, but which by its practical exclusion from the benefits of the income franchise was deprived of its right, has received it under the Farmers' Sons' Franchise Act of last session. (Hear, hear, and loud cheers.) The true tests of the franchise to my mind are citizenship and intelligence. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) I don't think we can uphold the franchise of any of the Provinces as perfect; but the nearer we can approach to the practical adoption of the rule that every good citizen possessing a reasonable share of educated intelligence shall have a vote, the nearer shall we approach to what is my idea at least of the true basis of the franchise. (Loud cheers.) I rejoice that the men of this Province are admitted to the franchise while still young. I have always believed that the exercise of the franchise is in itself a very great educator, and that those who were about in a very few years to wield by their votes their country's destinies should be initiated into the discharge of that duty while yet their votes, though powerful, do not predominate. Being thus called on to take an early and active interest in the politics of the country, they will be the better fitted for the discharge of the duties of citizenship when they in their turn shall form a majority of the electors. (Loud cheers.) I congratulate the young men of Canada upon the right which has been recognized as theirs. I trust and believe that they will use it wisely; that they will use it as true Canadians ought—for the interests of this country in which they were born, in which they expect to live and die, and which holds within its bounds what is most dear to them, whether of substantial or immaterial things. (Renewed cheers.)

The Election Act—Penalties for Corrupt Practices.

It soon became apparent that the Election Law did not secure the trial and punishment of offenders against its provisions, and that a long series of penalties on the statute book was but a solemn farce. We have, therefore, passed a law making it the duty of the judge, on finding a *prima facie* case of breach of the Election Act, to try the supposed offender early and summarily without a jury, and to inflict on the convict imprisonment as well as fine—not fine alone, because, the mere infliction of a fine might be no punishment to a wealthy man, and does not involve the disgrace which attaches even to a short term of imprisonment. I believe that those who have hitherto either recklessly or corruptly broken the law will be afraid to break it now, and that we will find ourselves on the approaching occasion nearer a pure election than ever before. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) It became apparent that the law was defective also in that it did not provide sufficient means for the prosecution of enquiries into certain cases where yet corrupt practices probably prevailed; and we have accordingly made provision by which a Parliamentary Commission may issue for a full enquiry into cases in which, by the judge's report or otherwise, it appears that the investigation before him was stopped by the action of the parties, and that there are grounds for believing that further enquiry would be desirable. By these means the breakers of the law will be discovered, and it will be in the power of Parliament, if the corruption shall appear widespread and an example become necessary, to resort even to the extreme and somewhat arbitrary step of delaying or declining to issue a new writ. (Cheers.)

An Untrammelled Vote the Highest Liberty.

You know that I have for some time favoured a change in the present system of representation, believing that it involves injustice, inequality, and chance to an extent not creditable to this country, and which would not be endured but that long habit and practice have blinded us to its obvious defects. You are aware that I did not think the subject ripe for Parliamentary action; and I should not myself have presented it at present to the notice of the House. Some progress has, however, been made in that direction. A Select Committee was struck last session, at the instance of a member whose illness unfortunately prevented the prosecution of the enquiry; but I suppose that it will be resumed next session, and I venture to believe that if that enquiry be prosecuted, facts will be disclosed which will tend to the formation of a sounder public opinion on the subject, and which will at any rate show that the present system is so defective as to require amendment. Another demand of a very different character has been made from very high quarters, namely, that we should alter the law as to undue influence. Now, the basis of our representative institutions is that our elections shall be free. Each of us is called on to surrender his share of

control over the common affairs to the majority, upon the ground that this surrender is necessary, for so only can we reach a decision; but also on the hypothesis, without which the demand would be quite unjustifiable, that, all having a common interest, and each man speaking freely for himself, the view of the majority is more likely to be sound—is more likely accurately to represent what would be beneficial to the community than the view of the minority. This is the groundwork. Now, that ground-work wholly fails if the vote be not the expression of the voter's own opinion, but the expression of somebody else's opinion different from his. (Hear, hear.) If, instead of its being his opinion, it be the opinion of his employer, his l[illegible]ord, his creditor, or his minister, why, it is not his vote at all, it is somebody else's, and [illegible] not submitted ourselves to the free voice of our fellow-countrymen, but possibly to the vo[illegible]ery small minority, who have determined what the voice of the larger number is to be. [illegible] the whole basis of our representative institutions would be destroyed if we permitted the opinions of our employers, creditors, landlords, or ministers to be forcibly substituted for our own. (Hear, hear.) For this reason, besides the penalties which are enacted against the exercise of undue influence, we have declared that the vote of any man so unduly influenced shall be null and void, and that elections carried by such undue influences shall be annulled. I cannot, if a landlord, say to my tenant, "Now, tenant, I shall turn you out at the end of your term if you do not vote for my candidate." Though I may have a legal right to turn him out at the end of the term, yet I cannot give the intimation that I will, on this ground, exercise this right. If I do, the vote is annulled as not free. I cannot, if a creditor, say to my debtor, "I will exact that debt at once if you do not vote as I wish," though I may have a legal right to exact my debt. I cannot, if an employer, say to my employee, "You shall leave my employment at the end of the current term unless you vote with me," though the law may not oblige me to retain him in my service. It has been found necessary in all these cases to prevent the relations to which I have referred from being made the means of unduly influencing the vote, in order that this great cardinal principle of our Constitution—the freedom of each man to vote according to his own opinion—may be preserved intact. (Hear, hear.) True, the landlord, and the creditor, and the employer have each the right to speak and persuade by arguments; and the confidence placed in them may be such that the voter's opinion may be changed; but between the argument, the persuasion, the confidence which may conduce to a change in the mind and opinion of the voter, and that coercion which compels him to vote contrary to his mind on the threat of some loss or penalty, there is a broad and palpable distinction, and that is the distinction which the law lays down. Now, if there be a form of religion under which the minister is supposed to have the power, by granting or refusing certain rites, or by making certain declarations to affect the state of the voter after death, is it not perfectly obvious that the threat of such results to the voter unless he votes in accordance with the opinion of the minister, might be infinitely more potent than any of the other threats which I have named—the exaction of a debt, the ejection of a tenant, or the discharge of an employee? (Hear, hear.) And would not such a threat be obnoxious to just the same objection?

Christian and Political Principles—Their True Relations.

I am far indeed from implying that politics should not be handled on Christian principles. Whatever difficulties and differences there may be as to Christian dogma, there is, fortunately, very little difference concerning Christian morals. We are, fortunately, all united in this country in the theoretical recognition—however far we may fail in the practical observance—of the great doctrines of Christian morality which are handed down to us in the Gospels; and I believe it is on the basis of those doctrines that the politics of the country should be carried on. (Hear, hear, and loud cheers.) Dim indeed would be our hopes, and dark our expectations for the future, if they did not embrace the coming of that glorious day when those principles shall be truly, fully and practically recognized—if we did not look forward to the fulfilment of the promises that "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of the Lord;" and that "nation shall not make war against nation, neither shall they learn war any more;" if we did not watch for the time when the human law of self-interest and hate shall be superseded by the Divine law of self-sacrifice and love. But while we hope and strive for the accomplishment of these things, we must not forget the lessons of the Great Teacher and Exemplar. When interrogated upon secular things—when asked as to rendering tribute to Cæsar, He said, "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and to God the things which are God's." He laid down the principle, and He left the people—the querists—to make the application. So again when He was called upon to settle a dispute between two brothers about an inheritance, He said: "Man, who made Me a judge or divider over you?" Such was the view He took as to the duty of a minister, as to the work of the pulpit; and while I do not hesitate to say that to all ministers I would freely accord the right as citizens of voting, of expressing their opinions, of arguing and persuading, and influencing if they please, my own opinion is that the pastor of a flock divided on politics will be much more likely to retain the fullest confidence of all the members of that flock, and so to discharge effectually his great task, if he abstains from active interference in those political affairs on which there is and will be great division of opinion among them. (Hear, hear, and loud cheers.) But, sir, it has been argued in some quarters that the free exercise of one form of religion amongst us is impaired by this law. That would indeed, if true, be a serious thing. But if it were true, we would still be bound, in my opinion, to preserve the fundamental principle of the freedom of the elector. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) No man, any article of whose creed, should make him a slave would be fit to control either his own destiny or that of free men. A slave himself, he would be but a proper instrument to make slaves of others. Such an article of religion would, in a word, be inconsistent with free institutions, because it would not permit that liberty of opinion in the individual, which is their very base and corner stone. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) But we are not confronted with that

difficulty. The public and deliberate utterances of high dignitaries in more than one Province of Canada have shown that the assertion is unfounded, and have recognised the right of every elector to vote according to his conscience ; and the recent statement—communicated to the public through Lord Denbigh—of the head of that Church, shows that the United Kingdom, where the law as to undue influence is precisely the same as ours, is perhaps the only country in Europe where the professors of that religion are free to practise it. If this be the case in the United Kingdom, it is so here, and it is not true that there is any form of religion, the free and full exercise of which is impaired by the preservation of the great principle to which I have referred. I trust, then, that the ill-advised pretensions which have been set up will be abandoned ; but should they be pressed, I take this opportunity of declaring that for myself, whatever be the consequences, I shall stand by the principle which I have laid down—(loud cheers)—and shall struggle to preserve—so far as my feeble powers permit—to each one of my fellow-countrymen, whatever his creed, the same full and ample measure of civil freedom which he now enjoys under these laws which enable him and me, though we may be of diverse faiths, to meet here on the same platform, and here to differ or agree according to our own political convictions, and not according to our religious faith or the dictation of any other man, lay or clerical. (Loud and repeated cheers.)

The Independence of Parliament—The Anglin Case.

My references to the Electoral Law would be incomplete without some allusion to the question of the independence of Parliament. I have been charged with being personally responsible for advice said to have been given, under which the late Speaker of the House, and, as it is asserted, several other members, entered into pecuniary relations with the Government. I meet that charge with the distinct declaration that it is utterly false. (Cheers.) I never gave such advice ; I never was asked for advice, or consulted upon the subject. I think the men of Bruce are aware from what I have said to them and done amongst them what my answer would have been to any such question. You know that on two occasions I have resigned my seat for this Riding and submitted myself for re-election, not because the letter of the law required it, but because, under the circumstances, I thought it more consistent with the spirit of the law that I should give you an opportunity of determining whether I should continue your representative. That is the principle on which I have acted, and on which I shall continue to act. Had I been asked to advise in this case, I would have said it is needless to consider whether the proposal is within the letter of the law ; it is within its spirit, and I decline to be a party to it. But I was not asked. The truth is, that a late member of the Government ordered this printing to be given to Mr. Anglin without the knowledge of any of his colleagues ; that the circumstance did not come to the knowledge of the Government until January, 1876, and that as soon as possible, within eight or ten days thereafter, the Government ordered the arrangement to be entirely discontinued. These facts are not now stated for the first time. They were stated over and over again in Parliament, and have been established by the most indisputable evidence. It has been alleged that I defended this transaction in my place in the House. I did what I believe you will approve. The Speaker of the House of Commons happens to be the only man there who, if spoken to or about, cannot speak back—who, if attacked, cannot reply. He is debarred by his situation from saying a word, no matter how cruelly wounded, no matter how unfairly aspersed, no matter how complete may be his defence to the charge against him.

A Right and a Wrong Way of Disposing of the Matter.

There was a mode of bringing up this matter by which British justice would have been satisfied and British fair play observed, and there was another mode by which the accused might be judged without the opportunity of defence. Sir, the mode our opponents chose was not the former ; it was the latter. (Hear, hear.) They were called on to withdraw the motion ; they were told that a Committee of Enquiry would be agreed to, before which the Speaker might appear to answer the injurious insinuation that he had been purchased, might establish the facts, and furnish the arguments and precedents which he thought material on the legal aspects of the case—by which, in a word, enquiry and defence might precede decision. They were called on not to ask the House to condemn a man unheard ; but they declined, and I was amongst those who by voice and vote rejected such an unjust, such an arbitrary, such an unfair and un-British motion as the one they proposed, preferring the enquiry which was promised during the debate, and which was ordered within five minutes of the defeat of the motion. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) On that enquiry Mr. Speaker had an opportunity of defending himself. The charges which had been made against him of having sold his position, of having made a bargain unworthy of him, were repelled by him ; the circumstances were stated, the precedents on the strength of which he acted were quoted by him, and his case was fully and fairly brought before the public and the House. The Committee determined that the precedents did cover the case, but that they were erroneous, and that on the true interpretation of the law the seat was vacated, and they reported accordingly. It has been charged against the Government that they deferred the presentation of the report of that Committee. Sir, that is a most unjust charge. In the first place, the Government had no power to defer the presentation of the report ; and secondly, the Committee themselves unanimously agreed in my presence on an instruction to their chairman to defer it to the last moment before prorogation ; and for having complied with this instruction, men who are led by members who in Committee gave the order, say that the chairman and the Government are at fault. The report also unanimously found that the law passed by our predecessors on this subject was defective and required amendment, and I have no doubt that the Minister entrusted with that duty will be prepared with such amendments as may be necessary to put the law on a proper footing.

The Insolvent Act—Its Amendments.

The next matter of legislation to which I would refer for a moment is the Insolvent Act. It had been passed before I took office. It is a very difficult subject. It is impossible to frame an Insolvent Law which shall work satisfactorily or even tolerably, unless by the active and earnest co-operation of creditors. Several alterations have been effected, I trust for the better. An effort has been made to secure for the creditors further control over the estate; to secure to them some estate to control; and to provide additional safeguards against the misconduct of assignees: I am far from saying that the law is even now perfect, but I hope it is improved.

The Supreme Court Act—That "Little Bird" a Mocking Bird.

Then there was the Supreme Court Act, which was also passed before I took office. A prominent leader of the Opposition had declared in the House that that Act would be disallowed; later he stated publicly that he had been told the same thing by a little bird. (Laughter.) He said that this Act had struck a blow at the connection. I do not disguise my sentiments on this subject. I am of opinion that our disagreements as to the construction of our own laws can be better decided by our own Courts, filled with men familiar with our Constitution, customs, and jurisprudence, than by any foreign body of jurists, however eminent. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) I am certain they can be so decided much more economically and expeditiously; and my opinion is that the appeal to the Privy Council should be abolished, or, at any rate, that the minimum amount for which an appeal can be made should be raised very high. These men are crying out that we are interfering with the "connection," Do they know what an expensive affair this so-called link of the "connection" is? I had occasion to enquire a short time ago, and I found that the average total costs on both sides of an appeal from Lower Canada are about $5,000; while the average time which is taken up between the initiation of the appeal and its decision is between two and three years; so that whether you gain or lose, you are kept in suspense during this period, and perhaps have to pay the enormous sum I have named for the privilege of preserving this so-called link. It is indeed a golden band! Why, the average cost of an appeal to the highest Court in your own Province is perhaps $400, and that of an appeal to your own Supreme Court should be only a trifle more, perhaps about $500, while the time occupied in reaching a decision should not exceed a very few months. I believe that those of you who may be unfortunate enough to be involved in litigation will hardly thank the Opposition for their efforts to preserve this expensive privilege, which is really a privilege to the rich as against the poor suitor, and which has been greatly abused in some of the Provinces. (Hear, hear.) I believe you will be quite prepared to say that if we are fit to determine what our laws shall be, we are fit to interpret those laws after they are made. And this is the whole question involved in the appeal to England. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) But, sir, this was not a question really raised by the Act, because the prerogative right of Her Majesty was expressly saved; but the subject was so confused by the attacks of the Opposition that some difficulty was felt regarding it, and I was requested by the Colonial Secretary to proceed to England to confer with him on the subject. I did so, and the result was that the Act was not disallowed; it was left to its operation, and so the little bird on this, as on some other occasions, did not sing true. (Hear, hear, and laughter.)

Criminal Statistics—Legislation Thereon.

Another subject of recent legislation was that of criminal statistics. We are constantly passing laws on the subject of crime and its punishment. The tide of crime has been rising fast; and the problems involved are fraught with painful interest to the whole community. It is not creditable to us that we should have been so long without an efficient system of statistics, which should show how the laws work; how far punishment follows crime; the effects of different modes of punishment; the increase or diminution in the different kinds of crimes; and the growth of the class of habitual criminals; thus pointing out the cases which require remedial legislation, and to a great extent indicating the appropriate remedy. We have provided at a small expense for the collection and registration of these statistics; and I hope that the beneficial result of that measure will soon become apparent. While touching on this subject I may add, that we have provided for the collection also of insolvency statistics, which are of great importance to the commercial and to the whole community. I may say generally, that it is unfortunate that Canada should be so imperfectly supplied with machinery for the collection of statistics on many other subjects of interest. My colleagues, in common with myself, are fully alive to that fact, and it is only the question of expense which, in the present condition of the country, deters us from proposing the creation of that statistical machinery which every free community must feel to be material to intelligent, sound and progressive legislation.

Rights of the Subject to Sue the Crown Recognized.

Another piece of legislation important to a considerable class is the law giving the subject the right to sue in respect of claims against the Crown. Until lately there was no such right in Canada; no matter how plain and just might be the demand, the subject could not take it into Court and pray for judgment against the Crown. By an Act introduced by a private member in 1875 such claims were submitted to the decision of Provincial Judges; but to that plan there were obvious objections, which became remediable after the organization of the Supreme Court; and it became our duty to introduce another law placing this matter on its present footing, and providing for the disposition of such cases by that Court.

The Labour Laws—Sir John's Bungling Legislation Rectified.

Another subject which attracted our anxious attention was the condition of the labour laws. The old law with reference to combinations of working men and of employees was not satisfactory, and in the session of 1872 the then leader of the Government passed an Act which was claimed

by him, and was supposed by the working people of that day to be an immense boon to them. No long time passed, however, before they found it was a fatal gift; and they became as anxious for its repeal as they had been grateful for its enactment. A temporary law was promoted by my predecessor in 1875; and in 1876 a permanent law was introduced, by which the subject was removed from the list of class-legislation. The law is no longer directed specially against employers and workmen, but is general, and applies to all persons using violence or threats to compel others to do what they have a legal right to abstain from, or to abstain from what they have a legal right to do. Under this law such acts of violence or threats are punishable, and so the freedom of action of each individual is guarded; but it is not criminal for any person, whether an employer or a workman, to combine with others for the accomplishment by lawful means of such objects as the raising or depressing of the rate of wages.

Workingmen Protected in their Rights.

Those workmen, therefore, who wish, can unite and co-operate for this purpose; but they are not permitted to injure or threaten a fellow-workman who may choose not to enter their combination. No doubt there remains to them considerable power of coercion, by means of which the law cannot take cognizance. The acts which are restrained are those palpable wrongs which are the proper subject of criminal legislation, and their definition has been carefully framed, so as to avoid as far as possible injustice either to the union or the individual. Provincial laws remained in force until last session which made breaches of contract of service criminal, though no other breach of contract was a crime. If I contract to pay a man a sum of money, a breach of that contract is simply a civil wrong; it is not treated as a crime; and there is no reason, according to our more modern and juster notions, why an employee who, having contracted with me for a month's labour, breaks that contract, should be regarded as a criminal. (Hear, hear.) This remnant of class legislation has been removed, and ordinary breaches of contracts of service are no longer criminal. There are some cases, however, of breaches of contract, whether of service or otherwise, which do obviously partake of the character of crimes, as where a man wilfully breaks a contract knowing that the consequence will be great public loss or inconvenience, or the destruction of valuable property. These breaches we have kept in the list of crimes, specifying the cases of contractors with gas and water companies who wilfully break a contract knowing that the consequence will be to deprive the town of gas or water, and those of contractors with railway companies carrying mails who wilfully break their contracts, knowing that the consequence will be to delay or prevent the progress of trains, and so cause loss and inconvenience to large numbers of passengers, besides stopping the arteries of commerce and the despatch of the mails. It has been our desire to secure the abrogation of all class privileges, and so to legislate as to place all classes of Her Majesty's subjects within Canada on precisely the same footing before the law. (Cheers.) It has been a great satisfaction to us to learn from our communications with both employers and workmen that the general scope of these measures is acceptable to both, and to observe that while our legislation is in the same direction as that which has taken place in England, it is more liberal, and exhibits a bolder application of the principle to which I have referred than they have yet been able to attain. (Cheers.)

The Grand Trunk Strike—The Government's Course.

Great interest has been aroused on this subject by the strike on the Grand Trunk Railway, when Mr. Mackenzie was blamed for not ordering the troops to various points which the men on strike were collected in considerable numbers with riotous intent. I am responsible for this action of the Government, for as its law officer I was called upon to advise, and I advised that we had no power to send the troops as proposed. It is now conceded that we had no such power; the contrary has not been even pretended latterly. I shall not detain you by discussing the constitutional principle underlying the statute on which my advice was based; but I may say that the old law as well as the new was founded on the view that the local authorities were and ought to be responsible for the preservation of the public peace, so long as the breach of the peace did not assume the character and proportions of a rebellious or insurrectionary movement; and that to the local authorities was, or should be, committed ample power—by swearing in special constables, or, if necessary, by calling out the militia—to discharge this duty. But there was this difficulty in the case of a railway riot—that the cause of disturbance might be a general one, extending all along the line, not originating in any particular municipality, while the expense of quelling it would fall upon the municipality, perhaps a weak one, within which the rioters might choose to gather, and naturally those in authority there would be reluctant to call out 200 or 300 militia, when their own small municipality would be called on to pay the cost of what was not in reality a local difficulty. We remedied this to some extent by providing that in certain cases of riots, causing obstruction to mail trains, the Government of Canada might pay the whole or part of the reasonable expenses of calling out the troops; but we left the responsibility and power where they were before, with the local authorities, both on the constitutional principle which forbids our trusting the Executive Government with the calling out of the troops, and also on the view that in a country such as ours it would be impossible for the Executive Government, with the necessary promptitude and exactness, to ascertain whether the case were one requiring the calling out of the militia, or to act upon their information. In the case supposed, the mails are stopped; the telegraph may be stopped; the riots are at one or more distant points. The Executive can neither judge nor act upon its judgment. We therefore left the power and responsibility with the local authorities. (Cheers.) This subject has attracted renewed attention from the recent extensive disturbances in the United States. Some of the large centres of population in that great country have been in the hands of a lawless mob for weeks; some of its great hives of industry have been broken up; millions of dollars worth of property have been destroyed; and complete

social disorganization has taken place. These are most deplorable events. Let us take warning by them. We are a sparse community, scattered over a great expanse of territory, disabled by these circumstances, as well as by the other demands on our limited resources, from providing bodies of trained servants for the preservation of peace throughout the land. We must trust to our own efforts as citizens for the preservation of the peace. We should therefore exhort our magistracy, our local authorities, and our citizens generally, to learn their duty, to consider the consequences in case unhappily such disturbances should get head amongst us. Celerity and decision of conduct are absolutely essential. Give the riot head, and it may grow to an indefinite extent; act at once, and it remains a trifle. Therefore it is that recognizing the possibility—however remote—of the spread of these disorders to our shores, we should determine to disregard all appeals for misplaced sympathy. (Hear, hear.) It is one thing for a man or body of men to say to their employers, "We are not paid enough for our labour; our contract is ended, and we cease to work for you unless you raise our wages." That is their right—a right used sometimes wisely, often imprudently, but still their right—to refuse which would make labour the slave of capital, and the exercise of which must be fully granted. But when they add to the strike violence; when, not content with desisting from employment, they, by violence or threats, coerce others of the community not to undertake the service which they themselves refuse to perform; when they seek by the destruction of property to obstruct the operations of trade and commerce unless their demands be yielded, they place themselves wholly in the wrong; and society should act promptly and sternly against them in its own defence, which, in such an emergency, in this country, can, as I have said, be done only through each man's readiness to go out as a special constable or as a militiaman, in order to subdue those who are making themselves outlaws, and subverting our whole system of law and order. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) I had purposed to say something on the subject of the relations of labour and capital, including the machinery of strikes and the schemes for co-operation in production and distribution, and for arbitration as a mode of settling disputes between employers and employees; but for this and some other topics of interest time and strength fail me, and I must pass on.

Our Maritime Laws on the Lakes.

Another important subject of legislation was that of maritime jurisdiction on the great lakes. Your county is bounded by one of these magnificent inland seas, bearing on its bosom an enormous commerce, For ages the relations of the commercial marine of every maritime country have been regulated by special laws applicable to the peculiar exigencies of such affairs, comprising a prompt procedure and a lien on the ship in respect of certain classes of wrongs and contracts. This code has prevailed for many years on the United States' shores of these lakes. They have there the power of arresting one of our ships to secure the redress of a wrong; but we had not the like power here. A proposal was made to apply for legislation in the Imperial Parliament creating **Imperial Vice-Admiralty Courts with jurisdiction on our lakes.** I did not favour that plan, thinking such legislation would be retrogressive; and believing, conformably to the opinions I have already expressed, that we are ourselves quite competent to determine what laws should regulate our maritime concerns, and to interpret and administer the laws we make, without resorting to the British Parliament for legislation. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) Having been charged with the duty of representing these views, and having come to a satisfactory understanding with Her Majesty's Government on the subject, I was enabled to promote last session the passage of an Act establishing maritime rights and remedies, and a Court for their execution—a law which we can ourselves, without the difficulties and delays incident to action in the British Parliament, mould and alter from time to time as our experience may indicate; and thus we have, at last, inaugurated a system which should have been in operation long ago. A general feeling was evinced by the House in favour of the extension of Canadian legislation to the maritime concerns of the sea-board; and I was gratified to hear re-echoed the opinion which I had expressed, that before long these matters also should be regulated by Canadian law.

Extradition—Important Negotiations.

Another subject with which we had to deal was that of extradition. The old Ashburton Treaty, regulating the mutual surrender of criminals between this country and the United States, is altogether too limited, many serious crimes against the person being omitted from its provisions, and a still greater number of that unfortunately increasing class which may be called commercial crimes. In all these omitted cases the offender finds a safe refuge in the neighbouring country. Between two States whose border of 3,000 miles is in many places unmarked by any natural line of demarcation, and where every facility exists for escape from one country to the other, the absence of fuller provision for the surrender of fugitive criminals is simply shameful. We have no right to negotiate directly with a foreign power; had it been otherwise, I believe we should long ago have concluded a satisfactory extradition treaty with the United States; but, as things were, we took the only course in our power, namely, to make a strong representation to the British Government. We found that after negotiations had been going on in a somewhat dilatory fashion for a number of years, they had been broken off on a point, as I judged, of no great difficulty. Soon after came the misunderstanding between the two Governments, into the details of which I have not time to enter, but which resulted in a dead-lock, the operation even of the old convention being suspended. I had been charged to discuss the subject with the British Government, and it became my duty to point out the intolerable position in which Canada was placed; that we could not recover our own criminals from the United States, while at the same time our country was made a refuge for the rascals of over forty millions of people; and that crimes, especially on and near the border, must greatly increase from the practical immunity afforded to the perpetrators. I urged, therefore, the pressing necessity for concluding a new treaty forthwith, or of reverting

to the old one. Negotiations were re-opened for a new treaty, and the operation of the old convention was revived. While the negotiations are pending a Commission has been issued by Her Majesty's Government to make enquiry into the whole subject, and I hope that before long our wishes may be gratified. Meantime we have succeeded in passing for our own purposes a law which provides new and improved machinery for putting in force the present and all future conventions; a step which had been attempted for some years without practical result. We have thus done all that is in our power, unless we should be driven to deal with the subject by legislation independent of treaty, which I hope will not be the case.

The Governor-General's Commission and Instructions.

I was also charged to discuss with the British Government the subject of the commission and instructions to our Governor-General. These documents are no longer suited to our circumstances. Under them the Governor is ordered not to act on the judgment of his responsible advisers, but according to his own discretion, in all cases of commutation of capital sentences, from which it should follow that there might be no responsibility on the part of his Ministers. So, also, he is instructed to act, if he sees fit, in opposition to the advice of his Council in other matters, with the same consequences; and further, he is instructed to reserve for Her Majesty's consideration Bills on various important classes of subjects on which we have been granted by the Constitution power not merely to pass Bills, but to complete the legislation by the assent of the Governor. In reply to the representations made of the anomalies contained in these instruments, the Colonial Secretary announced a general concurrence in those representations, and his intention shortly to forward a commission and instructions in general accordance with the views laid before him. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) These views, as you will have observed, were all in the direction of securing to us that fuller measure of self-government which becomes our station amongst the peoples of the world. (Hear, hear, and cheers.)

Canada's Future, and its Relation with the Empire.

And here I must seize the opportunity of saying a word or two with reference to our relations to the Empire, which were necessarily to some extent, however slightly and incidentally, involved in that discussion. You know that I have expressed the opinion, which, I believe, is shared by most thinking men, that these relations are anomalous, and that the present form of connection is not destined to be perpetual. My opinion is that the day must come when we shall cease to be dependents, as I hope, by exchanging dependence for association; by rising from the present position of colonists to that of partners in the freedom, the fortunes, and the responsibilities of the Empire. (Cheers.) The subject has received a considerable impetus since its discussion three years ago. One of the foremost statesmen of the English Liberal party, Mr. Forster, in the fall of 1875, delivered a long address, in which he fully recognized—what some people here do not feel disposed to recognize—the anomalous character of the present relation of England and her colonies, and said that the choice was between separation and federation; between partnership and dissociation. He gave his powerful voice for partnership; and he invited his fellow-countrymen—as I in my humble way invite mine—to look at the subject calmly from that point of view; and—the present tie obviously lacking the elements of permanence—to prepare their minds for the assumption of that full measure of freedom and responsibility which belongs to us as fellow-subjects of those Britons who inhabit the United Kingdom. (Loud cheers.) But I must leave this great theme and turn again to my narrative of domestic legislation.

Carrying Firearms.

I am sure you will agree that a measure was required with reference to the use of firearms. The carrying of revolvers by the disorderly or criminal classes and by young and irresponsible persons had become a crying evil. What in former days would have been a violent, perhaps a brutal but not a fatal blow with the stick or the fist, is now only too often a deadly pistol shot. We thought the time had come when we should cautiously, but still firmly, endeavour to repress the practice of carrying these weapons. Our law does not absolutely prohibit the carrying of pistols, but places it under necessary restrictions by dealing with those who are found carrying them without reasonable cause, or when arrested for crime, or with intent to injure another. We have also made it a crime to point a firearm, whether loaded or unloaded, at another. (Hear, hear.) You find every year perhaps as many as half a dozen cases of death arising from this reckless practice, which will, I trust, be checked by the knowledge that those pursuing it expose themselves to the gaol.

Gambling and other Crimes.

We have also passed what I hope will be useful laws upon the subject of gambling. Besides making it a crime to be present at, or join in, play at a common gaming house, we have provided for the summary punishment of persons gambling on trains or steamboats, or keeping betting offices, or selling pools—arrangements which are so common on the race-course and other places of public entertainment. Those of you who live in towns will know more perhaps than those who live in the country of the demoralization and ruin which have resulted from the spread of those gambling institutions, and will share my gratification that something at least has been done towards their repression—(hear, hear)—though I must express my regret that the operation of the Pool-selling Bill has been delayed and its efficiency diminished by causes over which the Government had no control.

Prison Labour and Discipline.

The subject of prison discipline has also occupied our attention. It is a great defect in our present system that we have no proper plan for the employment of our prisoners in our gaols, and the sentence of a criminal to hard labour is frequently a farce. He adds while serving his term

vicious company and idleness to his former qualifications for crime, and he too often comes out a worse man than he went in. Policy and humanity, which in truth always chime, here do so obviously, and teach that even in order to the repression of crime the reformation of the criminal should be kept in view. Accordingly, we have made some, though as yet very imperfect, provision for the employment of prisoners in the common gaols. We have also applied to the prisoners in the Central Prison a principle hitherto confined to the Penitentiary convicts; we have given to the prisoner the element of hope; we have held out to him the expectation of the remission of a definite portion of his sentence for good behaviour and industry; and I am confident that this provision will have a most beneficial effect, both in furthering the reformation of the prisoners, in facilitating the management of the gaol, and in increasing the value of the prison labour. Much, however, remains to be accomplished in the field of prison discipline; and I hope that the next few years will see something more done in that direction. There are several other measures to which, without departing from the limited range in which I have been engaged, I might direct your attention, but I must not trespass much longer on your time, and I have perhaps said enough to show you that the Government cannot be fairly charged with apathy or indolence in the performance of their duty as the initiators of practical legislation. (Hear, hear, and loud cheers.)

Personal Attacks by the Opposition.

I must now say a few words upon the personal attacks made on me a few weeks ago, because I did not go out of the Government altogether when I became unable, from ill health, longer to discharge the duties of Minister of Justice. I was charged by more than one speaker on that occasion with being guilty of dishonourable conduct because I did not follow the course suggested. I was told that I had committed political suicide by the acceptance of my present office. Sir, if I were disposed at this time to enter on a not unjustifiable course of retaliation and retort, the materials are plenty and convenient, and perhaps I am not altogether destitute of the power to apply them. (Hear, hear.) I might point out to you what manner of things the men who stigmatise my action as dishonourable have thought not dishonourable in themselves. I might show you what things the man who announces my political suicide has thought to be in his own case consistent with political vitality, aye, with political triumph. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) But at this time I forbear; I prefer to confine myself to my own vindication. Conscious of my absolute innocence, I shall not—however amazed at such language from such lips—I shall not enquire into the character of my accusers, or lower myself by the argument that they are guiltier than I, or close their mouths by the recital of their story. (Hear, hear.) Indeed, I understand that they consider all such allusions as ungenteel, irrelevant, and offensive, arguing that they make no pretence to the possession of public virtue, and that it is no part of the duty of a critic to live up to the canons he lays down for others. (Laughter.) You are well aware that I accepted office with very great reluctance, the grounds of which I am not here to particularize. That reluctance was but intensified by time; and when, after a considerable interval, it happened that my health gave way, and I found myself unable longer to discharge with efficiency the duties of my position, it did appear to me that I might fairly claim that greater measure of freedom and repose which I should have enjoyed if I had been permitted to return to the position I formerly held—the only position I desired to occupy—that of your independent representative. In that view, sir, I earnestly pressed on my friend Mr. Mackenzie the acceptance of my resignation. Mr. Mackenzie and my colleagues, however, thought that I ought not to leave the ship at that time if it could be at all avoided. I was referred to the example of a former holder of my place—an example which I do not cite in order to condemn his course—when he retained it for many months while wholly disabled by illness from discharging its duties. I felt, however, that the office required the presence of an efficient head, and that otherwise much of what had been accomplished would be lost, and I could not reconcile myself to the adoption of that course. Yielding to the earnest wish of my colleagues, I reluctantly adopted the only alternative which presented itself, and agreed to try the experiment for a time of a change to a lighter office. But these gentlemen now condemn me because, as they say, my office is a sinecure, the holder of which has nothing to do except to sign Orders in Council and draw his salary. I was a little amused when I read that charge, and I imagined to myself the council of war at which the line of attack upon me was settled.

A Council of War that Probably Took Place.

There were three generals in council, and I could almost hear one of them saying to another, "Now, you tell the people that Blake's office is a sinecure; that he has nothing to do except to sign the Orders in Council and draw his pay, and that it was a shame for him to take such a place." The other would doubtless reply, "Why, I can't very well do that; I was First Minister, and created the office. I am responsible for having assigned to it its duties and its pay, and for having appointed its incumbents for six years; and if I was right about the duties and the pay, and about filling the place half a dozen times—well, I can say a great deal (laughter), but really I don't think I can attack Blake for taking it." (Loud laughter.) I can conceive Number Two turning to Number Three and asking, "Will you say it?" and Number Three replying, "Well, I would like to have a dig at him—(laughter)—but the fact of the matter is, you have forgotten that I filled the office myself—(hear, hear, and renewed laughter)—I held it for more than two years, and if it was right for me to fill it, it can't be wrong for him. It is quite true that when I was there I did nothing but sign orders and draw my salary—(laughter)—but wouldn't I be blaming myself if I blamed him? I think, on the whole, I had better say nothing about it." (Laughter.) Then Numbers Two and Three would turn to the original introducer of the subject, and tell him, "You must say it. It is true you were a member of the Government which created the office and assigned to it its duties and pay, and you are therefore responsible with the rest; but then you know you

are not very particular about what you say—(hear, hear, and laughter)—*you* say it and we will back you up." (Laughter.) And he *did* say it; and they *did* back him up. (Loud laughter.) Well, the fact is that the departmental duties of the office are very light; but the fact also is—and those who made the charge knew it; I have heard them state it repeatedly—that it is important to a Government to have some offices lighter than others, and that there is always enough work to be done by every willing Minister; and although there may have been some Presidents of the Council—as I am bound to suppose from these gentlemen's own statements—who regarded their whole duty as limited to drawing their salaries and signing the orders, there may be others who intend to devote their time and strength and ability, such as it is, to the public service, no matter what their office or its special work. (Cheers.) Gentlemen, depend upon it there is quite enough for a willing Minister to do. It is my sorrow that I am just now disabled for any considerable exertion. I am labouring according to the measure of my strength—should that be increased, I shall devote its increase to your service. (Cheers.) And if matters are otherwise ordered, I shall feel it my duty to resume the more private station which I never wished to quit. But I am referred to a speech in which I expressed reluctance to accept a light office, and the opinion that the salaries should bear some relation to the duties. I did express that reluctance; I did hold that opinion; I entertain that reluctance and hold that opinion still; and I have already stated the circumstances which overcame my disinclination. But, sir, when, at the proper time, on the occasion of the readjustment of salaries in 1873, while these gentlemen were in power, an effort was made in this direction, they objected. (Hear, hear.) They pointed out the difficulties—and I confess they are serious—and Mr. Mackenzie, who made the suggestion, thereupon withdrew it, and the proposals of the late Government were adopted without division. There is not, under these circumstances, any reasonable ground for the belief that a change is feasible.

It is extremely painful to me, even in answer to personal charges, to make any reference to my personal affairs; but as I am in effect accused of sordid and improper conduct in drawing the salary of my office, I think I ought to add that ever since I entered the Government I have continued to maintain my family out of my private means, and have devoted every shilling of my official salary to those extra expenses and disbursements incidental to my public and official position; and this course I intend to pursue while I remain in office. (Cheers.)

No Craven Appeals for Office.

If it be indeed true, as has been said, that in the late change I have dug my political grave, I can only say, gentlemen, that I am quite ready for my end; I am not over-anxious for a longer life, and I am prepared to meet your verdict, whatever it may be, with decent composure, and even with modest cheerfulness. I make no frantic appeals, I urge no personal grounds, for a continuance, such as I observe are now being made by our opponents for a restoration of public confidence. You know that I have never asked any man's vote as a favour; that I have sought to impress on you that your vote is a high trust which you are bound to exercise in support of the man whom you believe in your conscience to be best fitted to discharge the important duty of a representative of the people. You know that, without presuming myself to institute comparisons between the competing candidates, it was on this ground that I first approached you; it was on this ground that you requested me to become your member for the Commons; and it is on this ground, and this ground alone, that I shall ever meet you. (Loud cheers.) It is not to-day, after ten years of service as your representative, that I shall base a claim to your confidence on any poor professions of what I may do in the future—still less on any arrogant assertions that I have accomplished much in the past. I know but too well how weak, how faltering, how defective has been my discharge of the duties you have imposed on me. Yet, if on the whole you have found me diligent; if you have found me honest; if you have found the general tenor of my public conduct such as you thought best calculated to promote the public good,—on these grounds, if on any, I shall challenge a continuance of that confidence with which you have so far honoured me; nor do I believe that I shall challenge it in vain. (Prolonged cheers.) And what I say to you as the representative of this Riding I say to the people of Canada as a member of this Government: that no more shall we as a Government than I as your representative imitate those frantic appeals to which I have referred. Our record is before you. When attacked, it is our duty to explain; when complaints are made, it is our duty to answer them. You are to judge for yourselves; it is not our affair, it is yours. (Loud cheers.) Choose whom you will to serve you, and we shall acquiesce—whatever may be our opinion as to the relative claims of ourselves and our opponents—we shall cheerfully acquiesce in your decision, even though it should relieve us from the very great responsibilities which beset the government of Canada. We are not here to press for a continuance of office, but to render an account of our stewardship—to state what we have done, to refute the accusations made against us, to discuss the policy of our opponents, and to leave to you, without a single word of entreaty or of pressure, the free decision as to whether the confidence which has been extended to us shall still be continued. (Loud cheers.)

The Goderich Harbour "Job."

Sir, I believe it would be preposterous for me in this Riding to refer at any great length to what is called the Goderich Harbour affair. (Hear, hear.) I observe that one of my opponents at a public meeting has misquoted a letter of mine by leaving out an important word. Another has garbled that letter by underlining a word, in order to give it some sinister meaning. I leave it to you to apply the fit epithet to such conduct. It is true that on the 2nd of January, 1874, I wrote a private note to Mr. Mackenzie in these words:—

"TORONTO, January 2nd, 1874.

"MY DEAR MACKENZIE,—David Moore, of Walkerton, asks me to inform you that he is about to tender for the Goderich works, and I do so accordingly. I told my friend Moore that an introduction was unnecessary, as you would let the work fairly without respect of persons."

(Loud cheers.) Well, I fancy that a good many of you who hear me to-day have heard me say just the same thing at meetings in this Riding. (Hear, hear.) That is just the doctrine I have been preaching to you for the last ten years with reference to the letting of contracts for public works. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) Before I made my statement in the House, the leader of the Opposition, though, most illogically as it seemed to me, co-operating in the imputation of corruption on Mr. Mackenzie, used as to myself these words :—

"The letter written by the hon. the Minister of Justice was highly creditable to him—it was a letter which Mr. Moore had a right to ask from him. Mr. Moore supported the hon. Minister of Justice as a candidate for North Bruce in 1867. He was, therefore, a friend of the hon. gentleman, and had a right to receive a letter stating all the hon. gentleman could honestly state. The hon. the Minister of Justice was not in any way personally responsible for the loss of those $29,000 to the country."

Well, sir, I could, if I had chosen, have said something in favour of Mr. Moore, but you will observe that, in fact, I said nothing in his favour, and merely stated to him and to Mr. Mackenzie my understanding of the rule in operation, which precluded favouritism ; but I prefer on this occasion simply to read you the correct report of what I said in the House of Commons, so that my own constituents shall have precisely the same account of the matter which I gave my fellow-members and the country. Here it is :—

"Mr. Blake said he would confine himself entirely to the personal matter. He desired to state to the House his political relations with the persons who were interested in the contract—the only test remaining to be applied to the case. The persons who were interested in the contract were Messrs. Moore, Clendenning, and Wilson, of Walkerton. It was true that in the general election of 1867, when he stood for the Local Legislature in that constituency, he received the support of a very considerable number of gentlemen who had formerly belonged and professed to still belong to the Conservative party. Upon that occasion he was elected by a very narrow majority, and the Liberal candidate for the Commons was defeated by 150 votes, a Conservative being elected to that House. The vote was, therefore, in his case not wholly a party one. Among the gentlemen who gave him their support on that occasion were Messrs. Moore, Clendenning and Wilson, all gentlemen belonging to, and not altogether without note in, the ranks of the Conservative party. On the next occasion on which he stood for the Riding, viz., at the general election of 1871, Mr. Moore voted for, and Messrs. Clendenning and Wilson against him. The next election in that Riding in which he was concerned was in the fall of 1871, upon his accepting office, when he was elected by acclamation. The next election was the general election in 1872, upon which occasion Mr. Moore voted for him, while Mr. Clendenning and Mr. Wilson did not vote. The next election was in the fall of 1873, upon his resignation on again accepting office, at which time he was elected by acclamation. The next election was in January, 1874, shortly after the letter, to which reference had been made, was written, when Mr. Moore voted for, Mr. Clendenning voted against him, and Mr. Wilson did not vote. Mr. Moore told him that he and Clendenning and Wilson were about to tender for the work, and he (Mr. Blake) told him what was said in the letter. He was not influenced by the circumstance that Mr. Moore was a political friend. He knew that the whole of those persons were respectable citizens of his county, and he did not conceive that the question of a man's political relation to his member or to the Government ought in the slightest degree to affect his having every fair consideration with reference to the letting of contracts. Upon that principle he acted. Mr. Moore having been the person who came to him, he wrote the letter for him. Had Mr. Clendenning, Mr. Wilson, or Mr. Tolton come to him, he would have done just the same thing. He was content that any letter he had written, or any expression that he had used, with reference to the letting of any contract from the time he might be supposed to have any influence in such matters, should be made public, and it would be found that they had all been after the same fashion. He was convinced that his hon. friend (Mr. Mackenzie) would let this and all other contracts fairly, without respect to persons. He told Mr. Moore that he might depend on that, and nothing more; and he told his honourable friend precisely what he told Mr. Moore, so that he might understand, as distinctly as Mr. Moore and his partners, that his (Mr. Blake's) opinion was that contracts should be let fairly, without respect to persons. That was the last communication he had with any person in regard to this subject. He knew nothing more about it. He observed that the Order in Council awarding the work to Mr. Ellis was made upon the 13th February, ten days after the time he left the Government. Neither by letter nor by word of mouth had he any other communication with any person on this subject. Either this letter and the hon. gentleman's (Mr. Farrow's) insinuations were relevant, or they were not. He was glad to notice that the insinuations in which the hon. gentleman had indulged had, in effect, been repudiated by the hon. member for Kingston (Sir John A. Macdonald). The hon. gentleman introduced this letter for the purpose of supporting his argument. Inasmuch as that insinuation had been made, he thought fit to make this short, simple, plain statement of the facts. He saw that the hon. gentleman, by the course he had adopted, was endeavouring to induce the House to vote him guilty of some unworthy conduct ; and with this statement he would leave the matter in the hands of the House."

What I said then I say to you now, and so far as I am personally concerned I place the matter in your hands. Had Mr. Mackenzie been here I should have left to him the refutation of the charge made against him, that he let this contract corruptly, but as he is absent I ought perhaps shortly to refer to that charge. It is pointed out that the lowest tenderer was passed over, and it is alleged that this was done corruptly in order to favour Moore & Co. The only ground for supposing that Mr. Mackenzie would be disposed to favour these persons is my letter ; and yet, that letter is acknowledged to be quite a proper letter, and not, therefore, such as to lead Mr. Mackenzie to commit a great wrong. But it is said that the fact that the lowest tenderer was passed over is evidence of corruption. Mr. Mackenzie has answered this by showing that in scores of cases, involving millions of dollars, his accusers themselves passed over the lowest tenderers. But they reply, resorting to the curious argument I touched on a while ago, "That has nothing to do with it. You are only making the pot clean by proving the kettle black." "No," says Mr. Mackenzie, "I don't say that this proves the kettle black. I say simply, that it proves that your inference of corruption from the passing over of the lowest tender is a false and fallacious inference. If, indeed, you tell me that in these cases of yours you were corrupt, the condition of things is changed ; but so long as you say you acted fairly, so long you are not in a position to draw the suggested inference from the simple facts brought out." But Mr. Mackenzie points out further, by the memorandum of Mr. Page, the Chief Engineer, that the action taken was on the advice of that officer, and on the ground, among others, that the tender was too low—a ground which formed the sole basis of like action in several cases by the late Government. But yet again, when the lowest tenderers were passed over, it was not in favour of Moore & Co., but of one Ellis, to whom, though only $300 or $400 lower than Moore & Co., the Minister recommended the giving of the contract. It was actually awarded to Ellis ; and it was only because it appeared that Ellis had left the country, and he did not come forward to accept, that the contract ultimately fell to Moore & Co. These facts of themselves rebut all inference of corrupt intent. The charge against Mr.

Mackenzie for his action after I had ceased to be a member of the Government is therefore as baseless as the charge against me for my action in writing the January letter, which was my only concern with the matter; and if I were disposed to offer advice to those who have been engaged in disseminating these attacks through the country, it would be that they should search for some more plausible subject of complaint, for I am sure that the reiteration of these stale and exploded calumnies is calculated to disgust all intelligent and right-thinking men of whatever party. (Cheers.)

The Late Chancellor Blake--The Attack of an "Abandoned Man."

I wish I could pause here; but, not content with assailing me, my opponents have attacked the dead; my father's ashes have been disturbed in a vain attempt to injure my reputation, and a more successful effort to wound my feelings. I cannot describe to you the loathing and repugnance I entertain for the race of slanderers, of whom it has been well written that—

> "They that most impute a crime
> Are prone to it, and impute themselves,
> Wanting the mental range; or low desire
> Not to feel lowest makes them level all;
> Yea, they would pare the mountain to the plain
> To leave an equal baseness; and if they find
> Some stain or blemish in a name of note,
> Not grieving that their greatest are so small,
> Inflate themselves with some insane delight,
> And judge all nature from her feet of clay,
> Without the will to lift their eyes and see
> Her Godlike head, crowned with spiritual fire,
> And touching other worlds."

(Cheers.) By one of these, speaking near this place, my father was lately charged with having acted dishonourably in accepting the Chancellorship of Upper Canada. I shall not attempt to give in my own words the history of what ensued after Mr. Baldwin's Chancery Act was passed by the Government in which my father was Solicitor-General, though not of the Cabinet. I prefer to read you this account, published some years ago by a person conversant with the facts:—

> "When the measure became law, the question came who should be appointed to the seats on the Bench which had been created. There was but one answer in the profession. Mr. Blake was universally pointed out as the person best fitted for the post of Chancellor. It required considerable persuasion on the part of his colleagues to induce Mr. Blake to accept the appointment. He desired to remain in public life; his emoluments at the Bar were far greater than they would be on the Bench, and he would have much preferred to remain at the Bar for some years longer. But the pressure of his friends was greater than he could resist, and on 30th September, 1849, he accepted the Chancellorship. There were not wanting political opponents who declared that Mr. Blake had created the office that he might fill it, but all who knew the man and the position in which he stood were aware that it was with extreme reluctance he accepted the place. As his great judicial talents came to be recognized the voice of the slanderer ceased, and the services which he rendered on the Bench will, we doubt not, be now heartily acknowledged by all parties."

No doubt, sir, the writer thought, but he erred in thinking, that the voice of the slanderer had ceased. My father, after having, with the assistance of his brother judges, organized the Court, created an improved practice and procedure, and applied the principles of equity to the conditions of this country, was obliged to retire through illness, induced by over exertion in his office. Great further improvements have been made by his distinguished successors and by legislation; and the Court has thus, notwithstanding the attacks of one individual, acquired a high standing amongst us, flowing from a wide-spread conviction of its utility. (Hear, hear.) But my father is charged with impropriety in bringing up his sons to the profession of the law, with the probability of their practising in the Court of which he was a member; and I and my brother, who now fills a seat in that Court, are charged with indelicacy and obliquity of moral vision in practising there. Sir, I am acquainted with the career of our accuser. I know well the high sense of propriety and delicacy, and the exquisite rectitude of moral vision, which have for a long course of years distinguished him from ordinary men like ourselves. (Laughter.) We stand, I quite agree, on entirely different levels, and view these matters from entirely different standpoints. (Hear, hear.) I make no pretension to act on his principles; I altogether decline to accept his judgment on any question of propriety, delicacy, or moral vision; and I appeal with confidence to that of my fellow-countrymen, and to the examples of the illustrious persons whom I am about to name. (Cheers.) Why, sir, it has been the rule rather than the exception that sons of Upper Canadian judges should be brought up to the law, and should practise in the Courts of which their fathers were members. Three sons of Chief Justice Robinson were so brought up and so practised; two sons of Chief Justice McLean; two sons of Chief Justice Draper; and a son of Chief Justice Hagarty, of Vice-Chancellor Esten, of Judge Jones, and of Judge Galt. And is the honour of these eminent men, who all belonged when in political life to the ranks of my opponents—is their honour and that of their children to be besmirched for taking the course which they followed in common with ourselves? For by the same standard which is set up for my father and his sons they, too, must stand or fall. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) I say it is perfectly preposterous to impute wrong to him for bringing his sons up to, or to his sons for following, their father's profession. But it was also insinuated that our success at the Bar was due to a notion on the part of suitors that we would be favoured by the judge. For myself, sir, I would not say a syllable in reply to such a charge; but in the name of him who is gone I have to denounce these as outrageous calumnies, which I believe the common voice of the Canadian people will condemn. (Hear, hear, and loud cheers.) As a fact, I may observe that my father was absent through illness during the bulk of the time between my admission and his resignation. I don't believe my brother ever appeared before him. I did sometimes, though, as it happened, not very frequently; but whatever

measure of success we may have attained was due entirely to other causes, and by no means to any such unworthy suspicion of the honour and integrity of the first Chancellor of Upper Canada as has been so cruelly cast upon it by an abandoned man. (Prolonged cheers.) When, after a long period of suffering, my father died, a martyr to his work, his children, humbly recognizing his failings towards his God, yet placed upon his tomb, as expressive of his relations to his brother men, these words:—

——"Through all this tract of years
Wearing the white flower of a blameless life."

And now, sir, now, when seven years are nearly passed, I find that the voice of the slanderer has not yet ceased, and that we might more fitly have recorded there these other words:—

"Now is done thy long day's work;
Fold thy palms across thy breast;
Fold thine arms; turn to thy rest;
Let them rave.
Shadows of the silver birk
Sweep the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave.

"Thou wilt not turn upon thy bed:
Chaunteth not the brooding bee
Sweeter tones than calumny?
Let them rave.
Thou wilt never raise thine head
From the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave.

"Wild words wander here and there;
God's great gift of speech abused,
Makes thy memory confused.
But let them rave.
The balm-cricket carols clear
In the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave."

Mr. Chairman, I have done. The reputation of William Hume Blake is not my individual inheritance; its defence should not be my especial care. It is the common property of his fellow-countrymen, and they should prize it highly and guard it well. (Loud cheers.) I know, past all doubting, that to them I may confidently commit the vindication of him whose memory I hold dearest upon earth, and whose bright example of active, fervent devotion to the cause of freedom, truth and justice, of indomitable perseverance in the thorny path of duty, it has been my earnest aim to follow, with steps however unequal, and at a distance however great. (Loud and long continued cheers.)